**Aaron Pomis**

Zip Code of Residence: 28205

Years in Charlotte-Mecklenburg: Starting my 8th school year!

Previous place of residence:  Durham, NC        How long? 2 years

**Children:** My wife and are happily expecting our first child in December.  Our neighborhood school is Walter G. Byers Elementary.

**What is/was your experience with those schools:**

As an administrator with Teach For America I started observing teachers and working with the principal there in 2004.  I had a great experience with the staff members I met along the way.  In years since, I know they have had some additional turnover in the principal position, and Byers has been in the bottom ten elementary schools in terms of student proficiency on End of Grade tests, with only around 50% of student performing at or above grade level.  Byers is one of the new K-8 schools.

**What have you done to educate yourself about the history of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools:**

I have tried to take every opportunity to learn about our schools.  When I first arrived in Charlotte I visited the Levine Museum of the New South and spent a lot of time touring the Courage exhibit (it had just opened in 2004), and the larger section of the permanent exhibit downstairs that details the integration efforts in the 1970s.  Both exhibits are incredibly well done.  I have had the opportunity to meet with and discuss Charlotte history with current and past Charlotte Mecklenburg School board members.  I was a member of class 32 with Leadership Charlotte and was able to learn a great deal from meetings and presentations by school board members, Dr. Gorman, and a collection of public officials who connected their work to the school system like Mayor Foxx, Hugh McColl, Police Chief Rodney Monroe, and many others.  I have also done research online about the Swann case and also the subsequent decision that declared CMS a “unitary” system.

**Which of the following books about Charlotte, its schools, and public education in general have you read?**

( X )The Dream Long Deferred by Frye Gaillard

( X ) Other?

ü  Savage Inequalities by Jonathan Kozol

ü  What School Boards Can Do: Reform Governance for Urban Schools  by Donald McAdams

ü  The Skillful Teacher by Jon Saphier

ü  Driven by Data by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo

ü  A Framework for Understanding Poverty by Ruby Payne

ü  Strategies That Work by Harvey and Goudvis

ü  A Chance to Make History by Wendy Kopp

ü  The Essential 55 by Ron Clark

\*\*\* I was highlighted in the book Teaching as Leadership¸by Steven Farr

**Please share pertinent information about your background/experience which will inform your work on the Board of Education.**

I earned a BS in Chemistry from the University of Illinois at Urbana in 1996 and worked as an award-winning research chemist in Chicago for five years.

  In 2000, I was elected as a community representative to a decentralized school board in Chicago, where we were responsible for governance, and school leader evaluation.  During my two-year term I spearheaded partnerships with city council, neighbourhood groups, community organizations, local business, and the school system that beautified our school grounds, rebuilt our playground, and provided leased parking for residents and community groups that brought in over $200,000 a year in discretionary funds.

  Passionate for what is possible for children, I joined Teach For America in 2002, where I taught 7th and 8th grade science in Durham, NC and became the founding program director for Teach For America – Charlotte in 2004, helping nearly 200 teachers find success teaching in high poverty communities across Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

  I was elected to a local Charlotte school board, and as chairman, listened to the school leader and teachers to align our budget priorities to their educational priorities that created a budget surplus and increased math proficiency by twenty percent.

  I was the founding science teacher at KIPP Charlotte in 2007, and my science students performed in the top 10% of all 5th grade science students across North Carolina, tripling the average scores for minority students. In 2011, I became the Dean of Instruction at KIPP Charlotte.

  I was featured in the award-winning documentary Souls of our Teachers, interviewed on Charlotte Talks with Mike Collins: “Teaching in Charlotte’s Urban Schools”, and referenced in the book, Teaching as Leadership: The highly effective teachers guide to closing the achievement gap.